

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Qualified Candidates for the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Request for resumé.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is seeking qualified candidates to fill prospective vacancies on its Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS).

ADDRESSES: Submit resume to: Ms. Jude Himmelberg, Office of Human Resources, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

FOR APPLICATION MATERIALS, CALL: 1-800-952-9678. Please refer to Announcement Number 98-00001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Congress established the ACRS to provide the NRC with independent expert advice on matters related to regulatory policy and the safety of existing and proposed nuclear power plants. The Committee work currently emphasizes safety issues associated with the operation of 106 commercial nuclear power plants in the United States; the pursuit of a risk-informed, and ultimately, as appropriate, performance-based regulatory approach; digital instrumentation and control systems; and technical and policy issues related to standard plant designs.

The ACRS membership includes individuals from national laboratories, academia, and industry who possess specific technical expertise along with a broad perspective in addressing safety concerns. Committee members are selected from a variety of engineering and scientific disciplines, such as nuclear power plant operations, nuclear engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, chemical engineering, metallurgical engineering, structural engineering, materials science, and instrumentation and process control systems. At this time, candidates are specifically being sought who have 15-20 years of specific experience, including graduate level education, in the areas of nuclear power plant operations and probabilistic risk assessment.

Criteria used to evaluate candidates include education and experience, demonstrated skills in nuclear safety matters, and the ability to solve problems. Additionally, the Commission considers the need for specific expertise in relationship to current and future tasks. Consistent with the requirements of the Federal

Advisory Committee Act, the Commission seeks candidates with varying views so that the membership on the Committee will be fairly balanced in terms of the points of view represented and functions to be performed by the Committee.

Because conflict-of-interest regulations restrict the participation of members actively involved in the regulated aspects of the nuclear industry, the degree and nature of any such involvement will be weighed. Each qualified candidate's financial interests must be reconciled with applicable Federal and NRC rules and regulations prior to final appointment. This might require divestiture of securities issued by nuclear industry entities, or discontinuance of industry-funded research contracts or grants.

Copies of a resume describing the educational and professional background of the candidate, including any special accomplishments, professional references, current address and telephone number should be provided. All qualified candidates will receive careful consideration. Appointment will be made without regard to such factors as race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disabilities. Candidates must be citizens of the United States and be able to devote approximately 50-100 days per year to Committee business. Applications will be accepted until March 13, 1998.

Dated: February 2, 1998.

Andrew L. Bates,

Advisory Committee Management Officer.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Safety-Conscious Work Environment; Withdrawal of Proposal

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has considered several strategies in addressing the need for its licensees to establish and maintain a safety-conscious work environment. The NRC described these strategies and requested public comment in a document published on February 26, 1997 (62 FR 8785). The Commission evaluated the public comments submitted in response to its request and is withdrawing the proposal outlined in the February 26, 1997, document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

James Lieberman, Director, Office of Enforcement, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, (301) 415-2741.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The NRC published in the **Federal Register**, (62 FR 8785; February 26, 1997), a request for public comment on the implementation of a standardized approach to ensuring that licensees establish and maintain a safety-conscious work environment¹ with clearly defined attributes; the establishment of certain potential indicators that may be monitored and, when considered collectively, may provide evidence of an emerging adverse trend; and the establishment of certain remedial actions that the Commission may require when it determines that a particular licensee has failed to establish and maintain a safety-conscious work environment. In its discussion of the feasibility of using a standardized approach to this issue, the NRC described the attributes of a safety-conscious work environment; criteria to be considered as possible indicators that a licensee's safety-conscious work environment may be deteriorating; and standard options for dealing with situations where these criteria are not met. The NRC included draft language that could be used in a future rulemaking, new policy statement, or amendment to the NRC's Enforcement Policy.

The Notice requested public comments on various strategies for establishing and maintaining a safety-conscious work environment including where warranted the use of a holding period.² The NRC also sought comments on an alternate strategy in which all licensees would be required to institute

¹ The Commission's May 1996 Policy Statement on the "Freedom of Employees in the Nuclear Industry to Raise Safety Concerns Without Fear of Retaliation" (61 FR 24336; May 14, 1996), defined a "safety-conscious work environment" as a work environment in which employees are encouraged to raise safety concerns and where concerns are promptly reviewed, given the proper priority based on their potential safety significance, and appropriately resolved with timely feedback to the originator of the concerns and to other employees.

² In general, a holding period as described in the February 26, 1997, document would provide that, when an employee asserts that he or she has been discriminated against for engaging in protected activity, the licensee will maintain that employee's pay and benefits until the licensee has investigated the complaint, reconsidered the facts, negotiated with the employee, and informed the employee of a final decision on the matter. The holding period would continue for an additional two weeks to permit the employee to file a complaint under Section 211 of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended (ERA), with the Department of Labor (DOL), and, should the employee file, the holding period would continue until the DOL has made a finding based upon its investigation.